



DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION
HEALTH CARE BULLETIN
Issued: December 31, 2008

Emergency Preparedness

Audience: All

The District of Columbia is preparing for an historic inauguration on January 20, 2009, as President-elect Barack Obama is sworn in as President of the United States. There have been varying estimates of between one to four million visitors to the District for this event. The week prior to the inauguration from January 11-17th will include a number of events related to the inauguration and will draw additional crowds to the District.

These events, both leading up to and the day of the inauguration, have the potential for creating a number of adverse issues for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Metro has indicated in a Washington Post article that the Metro rail system may not be able to handle the number of visitors without breakdowns and delays. Metro buses are also expected to be more crowded and have the potential for delays. This may mean interruptions for consumers who are trying to access services within the District. It may also greatly affect employees trying to reach their work location on time.

At a point, not yet announced, a portion of the District from approximately the White House to the U.S. Capitol will be closed to traffic or greatly limited due to increased security. A perimeter will be established beyond the Pennsylvania corridor further disrupting access. This may also adversely affect access from one quadrant of the city to another.

The Washington Post also reported area hospitals are expecting a large number of emergency room visits by visitors to the District during this time. This will translate into longer waits for emergency services at area hospitals for consumers needing these services.

Some businesses will be closed both Monday for Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as well as inauguration day. This may mean problems in accessing needed supplies including medications during this time.

Remain diligent and be aware of your surroundings. If you see unattended items or anything suspicious, report them immediately to 911.

What you can do to prepare:

- Check Metro before you leave to ensure the route you are taking is still available and if there are delays. Metro will be posting closures and delays on their webpage. You can also have alerts sent to your cell phone or hand held device. <http://www.wmata.com/>

These Health Care Bulletins are for informational purposes only and are not meant to be a substitute for the advice provided by your own physician or other medical professional. You should not use the information contained herein for diagnosing a health or fitness problem or disease. You should always consult your own physician and medical advisors. 1



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- Register with Alert DC. Messages can be received on either your handheld or email as well as voicemail. The system allows you to customize the service to meet your needs. Emergency information will be provided via Alert DC by DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, Metropolitan Police, DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services and DC Department of Transportation. You can register for Alert DC at www.72hours.dc.gov
- **Prepare a plan.** Staff and consumers should all have a personal emergency plan. A number of tools are available to assist in preparing a plan. Some of these sites also have information for small business emergency preparedness.
 - http://eic.rrc.dc.gov/eic/site/default.asp?portal_link=cc
 - <http://www.ready.gov/>
 - http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_239_00.html
 - <http://www.disabilitypreparedness.gov/>
 - http://www.disastersrus.org/MyDisasters/disability/disability_preparedness.htm
 - <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/specialplans.shtm>
- Prepare a "Go Kit," but also prepare to shelter-in-place or stay put. (see Prepare a Plan)
- Ensure that you have adequate amounts of prescriptions and medical supplies (at least a three-day supply)
- Contact medical providers to find out their hours during the week before through inauguration day.
- Register for and take the Citizen Emergency Response Team course offered through Serve DC. This is a free class in emergency preparedness. <http://www.serve.dc.gov>
- Monitor the city's Inauguration webpage, inauguration.dc.gov or simply go to www.dc.gov

If you have questions regarding emergency preparedness please contact:

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